

James Madison to Benjamin F. Pepon, May 18, 1833. Transcription: The Writings of James Madison, ed. Gaillard Hunt. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1900-1910.

TO BENJAMIN F. PAPOON. MAD. MSS.

Montpellier, May 18, 1833.

Dear Sir Your favor of the 13th ult: was duly recd and I thank you for the communication.

It cannot be doubted that the rapid growth of the individual States in population, wealth and power must tend to weaken the ties which bind them together. A like tendency results from the absence & oblivion of external danger, the most powerful controul on disuniting propensities, in the parts of a political community. To these changes in the condition of the States, impairing the cement of their Union, are now added the language & zeal which inculcate an incompatibility of interests between different Sections of the Country, and an oppression on the minor, by the major section, which must engender in the former a resentment amounting to serious hostility.

Happily these alienating tendencies are not without counter tendencies, in the complicated frame of our political system; in the geographical and commercial relations among the States, which form so many links & ligaments, thwarting a separation of them; in the gradual diminution of conflicting interests between the great Sections of Country, by a surplus of labour in the agricultural section, assimilating it to the manufacturing section; or by such a success of the latter, without obnoxious aids, as will substitute for the foreign supplies which have been the occasion of our discords, those internal interchanges which

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are beneficial to every section; and, finally, in the obvious consequences of disunion, by which the value of Union is to be calculated.

Still the increasing self-confidence felt by the Members of the Union, the decreasing influence of apprehensions from without, and the natural aspirations

of talented ambition for new theatres multiplying the chances of elevation in the lottery of political life, may require the co-operation of whatever moral causes may aid in preserving the equilibrium contemplated by the Theory of our compound Government. Among these causes may justly be placed appeals to the love and pride of country; & few could be made in a form more touching, than a well-executed picture of the Magical effect of our National Emblem, in converting the furious passions of a tumultuous soldiery into an enthusiastic respect for the free & united people whom it represented.